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The Shape of Things

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WHILE THE PARLIAMENTS OF LONDON AND Paris were being hustled off on vacation, the situation in Europe took on again the characteristics of what the world now calls a "crisis"—meaning by this modest term the point at which no argument but that of arms can decide the issue. If in the pre-Munich crises of last year the dispatches were still full of argument about the merits of proposed solutions, the news of today is concerned almost exclusively with military matters. The discussion of differences to be adjusted has stopped, at least in public. The leaders of the "peace" front repeat again and again that they will not tolerate a new act of force; the axis answers with total mobilization and maneuvers on a scale which the world has never before seen. There can be no doubt that the combined might of Germany, Italy, Hungary, and perhaps Bulgaria will be ready for action within a few days. But in contrast with other crises almost the same can now be said of the military might of the democracies and of their allies—Turkey, Greece, Rumania, Poland. And the departure of the English-French military mission to Moscow can mean only one thing, namely, that the English-Russian negotiations which began on March 19 have turned finally to the essential and eminently practical point of how the burden of the coming war should be distributed among the "peace"-front allies.

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SUCH IS THE EUROPEAN PICTURE PRESENTED all too eagerly by the press, with the implication that this time war is at hand. Eight million men are already marching into position in Europe alone, not counting the Russians; the fleets are mobilized, the armament factories are at work on a twenty-four-hour schedule, reducing unemployment everywhere. What we do not see and hear are the negotiations going on behind this grim scene. We only know that they are going on. The story of Mr. Hudson and of his suggested billion-pound appeasement loan to Germany demonstrated clearly the direction of these secret negotiations. The ruling classes of the Western powers would like to avoid war for a

very forceful reason. They entertain no doubts that whatever the outcome of a new world war they themselves as a privileged group will be done for. Their fear of Hitler's aggression competes with their fear of what will come after Hitler is defeated—to take the better alternative. The olive branch which always decorates their rifles expresses not merely the contradiction in which a peace-loving fellow finds himself when pressed by a gangster but a much more complex situation. The English and the French Tories are torn as usual between their national and their class interest. Whichever one they wish to defend they feel themselves lost. They work hard on formulas which cover both, but real contradictions cannot be made to vanish by mere words. So the future seems to hinge on what course the economics of the Third Reich will suggest to Hitler, with whom the outcome of the new crisis still rests.

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THE ECONOMIC CONDITION OF GERMANY IS likely to prove a decisive factor in the critical weeks ahead. Were the Reich under rational leadership the overstrained state of its finances and industries would make for avoidance of war at all costs. But Hitler may find it a reason for a desperate gamble on a *Blitzkrieg*. The whole national surplus has for years been invested in armaments, and he may attempt to force Europe to pay a dividend on this sterile capitalization. Mobilization has increased the pressure on both finance and industry. The withdrawal of so many men from production leaves fields and factories shorter of labor than ever, and old men, women, and children are being rounded up to bring in the harvest. The appointment of a special commissioner to speed up coal production draws attention to the difficulty of keeping output abreast of demand. A gloomy report by Rheinische Stahlwerke, one of the leading coal and iron concerns in the Ruhr, points out that output per man per shift continues to decline despite the long hours now being worked. A sign of financial deterioration is the sharp rise in note circulation, which on July 31 stood at 11,209 million marks compared with 8,705 million a year ago. This increase of over 28 per cent is far greater than the improvement in production during the same period and suggests that the long-feared inflation is not far off. The official explanation of the note expansion which has occurred in the past few weeks is the need for extra cash during the mobilization exercises. But another cause may be the troubles of the tax-certificate system introduced early this year as a substitute for direct credit expansion. This system involved forced loans from industry and its success was dependent on the continued liquidity of private enterprise, which, owing to other government policies, has in fact sharply declined in recent months.

A CONFERENCE BETWEEN THE JAPANESE ambassadors to Berlin and Rome last week was followed by inspired rumors of an early military alliance between Japan and the axis. In Tokyo a high government official said that Japan was being "forced" toward this step by the intransigence of Britain and the unfriendly attitude of the United States. Nevertheless, there are reasons for believing that this alliance talk is chiefly intended for propaganda purposes. Germany and Italy are already doing Japan a good turn by keeping the British navy tied down in Europe and making unlikely the fulfilment of Mr. Chamberlain's threat to send a fleet to the Far East in certain contingencies. What more they could do is not quite clear: certainly they are in no position to give much economic assistance despite the huzzahs with which Tokyo greeted the new trade agreement with Germany. Moreover, too close a military tie-up with Japan might do the axis more harm than good at the present juncture, for it would, perhaps, provide just the necessary leverage to tilt over the obstacles blocking an Anglo-Russian pact. Meanwhile the Anglo-Japanese conversations continue, but so also does the anti-British agitation. There have been more assaults on Americans, more protests by our chargé d'affaires in Tokyo. Bombing raids have been resumed, and what appears to have been a deliberate attack was made on two British steamers and an oil station at Ichang. But no real progress has been made by the Japanese invaders toward completing their conquest. The Chinese, heartened by America's recent moves, are building up their forces and organizing new guerrilla raids even in the vicinity of Shanghai.

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ONLY TWO QUESTIONS ARE AT ISSUE IN THE Bridges deportation hearing: First, is Bridges a member of the Communist Party? Second, does membership in the Communist Party constitute belief in the overthrow of the government by force and violence? If the answer to both questions is "Yes," then Bridges is deportable. But we see no point in the interminable discussions of economics and politics into which Thomas B. Shoemaker, chief government counsel, has led Bridges, unless Shoemaker is himself interested in trying to help West Coast interests to build up a picture of Bridges as a dangerous radical even if he is not deportable. Bridges denies that he is or has ever been a member of the Communist Party. West Coast employers have been trying for some years to brand Bridges as a Communist. Shoemaker must be conscious of the weakness of the "proof" available if he finds it necessary to interrogate Bridges on the profit system, public ownership, the dictatorship of the proletariat, etc. This irrelevant interrogation of a man whose only crime is his ability as a labor leader is un-American, if that term means anything more than a cover-up for fascist-minded employers.

BEST NEWS OF THE WEEK IS THE SENATE'S grant of \$50,000 to the La Follette committee to finish its investigation of the Associated Farmers. This outfit appears to be our most effective strike-breaking organization and its fascist overtones makes it a menace on the Coast and elsewhere. Thanks are due to Senators Schwollenbach, La Follette, and Thomas for pressing the request for a new appropriation, to Hatch of New Mexico for helping the fight on the floor, and to the White House for bringing sufficient pressure on the Audit and Control Committee of the Senate to force an appropriation. "Cotton Ed" Smith's nauseating speech against the La Follette investigation, a speech into which he dragged his prejudices against the Negro, served only to win more support for the resolution, notably from Clark of Missouri. Senator Byrnes cut the \$100,000 the committee asked and needs to \$50,000 before reporting the resolution. Enough remains of Senator Hiram Johnson's liberalism to keep him from voting against the resolution, though he has been acting as champion of the Associated Farmers in the Senate. We note that Senator Sheridan Downey did not vote on the resolution although he knew it was coming up and was in the Senate chamber at other times during the same day. We think Senator Downey owes the people of California an explanation. Is he afraid of the Associated Farmers?

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IN ITS TWENTY-NINE-DAY STRIKE OF TOOL and die workers in twelve key plants of General Motors, the C. I. O. section of the United Automobile Workers won its principal victory over the American Federation of Labor. In the agreement which concluded the strike, both General Motors and the strikers could claim points of victory; what is more important from the point of view of union strategy, the C. I. O. group established itself as the representative of employees in some forty-two General Motors plants as against five for the Martin group, incidentally overcoming the company's attempt to use the factional fight as an excuse for not making agreements with either group. The next step is an NLRB election, which seems to be expected soon in all quarters but has not yet been definitely announced by the board itself. The board has ordered an election in the Chrysler plants, and its ruling that separate elections be held in each plant is being set down as favoring the A. F. of L. It is interesting in this connection to note the assertion in the *Wall Street Journal*, which might be considered impartial in that it hates all unions, though it would favor the A. F. of L. if any, that the faction led by Homer Martin has been slowly dying for lack of funds and experienced workers, while the C. I. O. group is thriving for contrary reasons. We hope that NLRB elections will settle the union dispute once and for all.

Saved by the Bell

ALTHOUGH the session of Congress just ended was largely isolationist in sentiment, it can so little be isolated from world events that its place in history is likely to be determined at Berchtesgaden. If Hitler strikes again in the next few weeks, this past session will bear part of the responsibility, and the margin of one vote in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that blocked revision of neutrality legislation will take on a fateful significance. The Führer can hardly be so ill-advised as to believe that the United States would stand aside from a major European struggle and obligingly help him to crush the Western democracies in the name of neutrality. But in a war of nerves or in a *Blitzkrieg* the debate and delay that must now ensue before we could change the neutrality law and lift its mandatory embargos on war supplies would weight the scales in the Third Reich's favor.

Regarded in the light of domestic politics, the session followed a familiar pattern. It has been the custom of Congress, in the last two years of a President's second term, to speed the parting guest. Congress has already begun to hand Roosevelt his hat, and personal animosity toward the occupant of the White House played its part in the failure to revise neutrality legislation as in the defeat of the lending-spending bill and the cantankerous misery-producing provisions attached to the relief bill. But as one goes over the record and mournfully picks up the pieces, it is clear that the victories won by the anti-New Deal coalition may easily be exaggerated. The crash could be heard as far as Palo Alto, but the wake being celebrated in the conservative press is premature. The New Deal is far from being a corpse, and Roosevelt, though no rugged individualist, again emerges as our most rugged individual.

For the coalition against the President failed to fulfil the hopes evoked on the right by the anti-New Deal trend at the last elections. The coalition had the votes. It did not deliver the goods. The main attack was on the three statutes which are the heart of the New Deal for labor—the Wagner Act, the Social Security Act, and the Wage-Hour law. The Wagner Act, though singed by fiery oratory, remains otherwise unscathed. The Social Security Act was liberalized. The well-heeled lobby of manufacturers and processors thrown into action against these three laws won but one victory: it deprived telephone operators in small rural exchanges of wage-and-hour protection.

Though the stump of the surplus-profits tax was repealed, tax revision had to be postponed and the "economy bloc" compromised itself. The anti-New Deal coalition killed the \$3,060,000,000 lending-spending bill and it killed the bill which would have doubled the United States Housing Authority's present \$800,000,000

borrowing capacity for slum clearance and low-cost housing. But the coalition ended its work by voting the largest peace-time budget in our history—\$200,000,000 larger than that asked by Roosevelt. A “rubber stamp” Congress in 1937 passed a \$9,300,000,000 budget. Congress in 1938 appropriated \$11,300,000,000. This last session exercised its independence and put its interminable speech-making on economy into action—with a \$13,300,000,000 budget. The “economy bloc” spent the first four months of the session industriously paring \$70,000,000 from Roosevelt’s estimates, and then proceeded to wipe out these laborious savings by voting \$383,000,000 more for farm relief than Roosevelt asked. The vote in the Senate will haunt some of our outstanding advocates of economy. On the Democratic side, Adams, Byrd, and Byrnes, budget balancers all, voted “Yes” on the increase. On the other side of the aisle, Taft and McNary, who follow the Roosevelt deficits like professional mourners, were guilty of something worse than inconsistency. They failed to vote “No.”

Much of the constructive work of the New Deal was continued, despite the coalition. The RFC, the “hot oil” act, the export-import bank, the FHA, the CCC were extended. The monopoly inquiry was given another \$600,000 and the La Follette committee another \$50,000. A reorganization act was passed; flood-control plans were widened. The SEC was given power to regulate indentures of bond issues and the Department of Agriculture to fix mandatory marketing rates for live stock. The President won his fight to retain the \$2,000,000,000 equalization fund and his power to devalue the dollar; worse than this defeat for the “sound money” bloc was the prestige it lost by the deal it temporarily effected with the silverites on devaluation and the equalization fund. The appointments of Justice Frankfurter, Attorney General Murphy, and Secretary of Commerce Hopkins were approved, though the Amlie nomination had to be withdrawn.

The coalition against Roosevelt showed more talent for obstruction than capacity for opposition. It did enough to provide the New Deal with a platform for 1940. The Hatch bill will undoubtedly hurt the President’s power to control the next convention, but it is more than counterbalanced by the taste this session provided of what the country may expect from an Old Deal victory in 1940. The attempts made to amend the Wagner, Social Security, and Wage-Hour acts indicate how far the reaction would turn back the clock. The memory will be kept fresh by the investigation authorized into the workings of the Labor Board, an inquiry designed to keep it from working, and by the continued Dies investigation. On relief the opposition showed itself inhumane rather than economical. Roosevelt obtained virtually all he asked for on relief so far as appropriations are concerned; the coalition merely succeeded in

some spite work. The Federal Theater Project was abolished, white-collar projects were curtailed, prevailing wages abandoned for skilled craftsmen, provisions added that will provide a field day for the red-baiters and for farm interests looking for cheap labor at harvest time. For all the complaints about “leaf-raking,” new restrictions written in by the coalition will make it harder than ever to do useful work with WPA.

Roosevelt has shown himself a better politician than his opponents. The problems of foreign policy and Roosevelt’s interchanges with Hitler served also to postpone action on the domestic “reforms” desired by the right. The unwillingness of the Republicans to take the risks of leadership was another factor in keeping the anti-New Deal coalition from going into action until too late in the session to accomplish its major objectives; adjournment saved the New Deal. The Republican Party, born of a struggle against the Southern planter, is now content to follow Garner and Cox, Pat Harrison and Byrd. Roosevelt’s defeats are compensated for by the ammunition his opponents have provided for 1940.

Reply to Coughlin

THE exposure by James Wechsler of Christian Front terrorism in New York City and our editorial on the subject, both of which appeared in *The Nation* of July 22, seem to have got under the skin of the Reverend Charles E. Coughlin. On July 30 the radio priest delivered over his \$20,000-a-week hookup a speech which his announcer described as “a call to action” but which for all its hysterical blustering seemed rather to sound a retreat under cover of a heavy bombardment of threats and lies.

It is clear that Coughlin wishes to avoid any responsibility for the Christian Front, which, his announcer claimed, is *not* “his organization.” His only role is to give a little encouragement and advice to its promoters, and that part of the speech directly addressed to the Front was prefaced with the words: “Were I a member of the Christian Front, had I any influence in blueprinting the principles and policies of the Christian Front, I would say. . . .” Weasel words from one who is always proclaiming his fearlessness, but understandable. If the terroristic methods and incitements of the Front bring it into conflict with the civil authority, the good father wants to be in a position to say: “I have no part or lot in this matter.” If the Catholic hierarchy at length takes notice of the racial hatred preached by the Front in complete opposition to the doctrines of the church, he wants to be able to claim: “My hands are clean in this matter.”

In this connection it is interesting to note how much of Father Coughlin’s address was devoted to attempting

to prove that he was not anti-Semitic. It is the "reds" and "radicals," he asserted, who are creating an anti-Semitic movement by calling all opponents of communism anti-Semites. Nonsense. Nobody has accused Mr. Hoover or Al Smith, to take two outstanding anti-Communists, of being anti-Semites; nor do we suspect the Liberty League, reactionary as it is, of promoting racial hatreds. It is the Christian Front, together with other pseudo-fascist movements, which has so eagerly imitated the Nazi trick of pretending that most Jews are Communists and most Communists Jews, and if Coughlin is sincere in his opposition to racialism he should repudiate the tactics of the Front in plain terms. It is not enough for him to say that "a Christian Front must never become an anti-racial front" when every meeting of his followers is devoted to abuse of the Jews as Jews and to appeals to boycott Jewish business. The distinction he draws between "good Jews" and "Communist Jews," and the tears he sheds over the fate of the former in Germany, are not very convincing so long as he publishes in *Social Justice* all the stale old lies about Jewish responsibility for the Russian Revolution and the machinations of the Jewish international financiers.

Coughlin's current disavowals of anti-Semitism come at a moment when his followers in New York are becoming more rather than less violent in their tirades against the Jews—and this is hardly mere coincidence. The fact is that already the monster that Coughlin created has got beyond the maker's control. The Christian Front, which piously pretended to except "good Jews" from its assaults, has begotten a natural heir called the Christian Mobilizers, which makes no such pretty distinctions. In true Nazi fashion the Mobilizers damn all Jews, and their violence and extremism may yet become a boomerang for the Frankenstein of Royal Oak. Already Coughlin's agitation has evoked echoes which are no less disturbing than the priest's own fulminations. One of his fellow-clergymen of Detroit expressed the general alarm "lest his [Coughlin's] incendiary words furnish the sparks that will light once more the dreadful un-American and un-Christian fiery crosses of anti-Catholicism." Catholic leaders, too, are aware of the danger and to their lasting credit are forming in many cities new chapters of the Committee of Catholics to Fight Anti-Semitism. The realization that any stirring up of religious hatred is a menace to Catholics as well as Jews is bound to make the good father hedge a bit.

Equally defensive was Coughlin's threat that if the Front cannot obtain its end in any other way, it will look for a Franco. One excuse for this hysterical outburst is the claim that *The Nation* by its demand for the suppression of incitements to violence was attempting to deny the Coughlinites freedom of the press. This, of course, maliciously misrepresents our position. We do not seek to have *Social Justice* banned, but we do ask that its sale

should not be an excuse for yelling provocative slogans and for insulting and even assaulting people who pass by.

Nor was this the only misrepresentation of *The Nation* in Coughlin's radio address. In speaking of our editorial (he carefully avoided mentioning Mr. Wechsler's article or attempting any reply to the facts it contained) he chose not to quote it directly but made use of a comment on it which appeared in the *Daily Worker*. The all too obvious intention, of course, was to convey that *The Nation* was also a Communist organ. In a further effort to muddy the waters he ascribed sentences from our editorial first to the *New Masses* and then to "a new red publication"—presumably *Equality*. This cunningly led up to a series of references to us as "the Bolshevik *Nation*." Well, we are used to verbal rocks from both right and left, but our readers know, even if Coughlin does not, that for nearly seventy-five years *The Nation* has been not a Bolshevik but a liberal magazine which has fought hard for the civil liberties of all groups without distinction of race or creed. Nor is this record in the least impaired by our demand that freedom of speech shall not be a warrant for incitement to violence.

But why expect any close attention to facts from Coughlin when he starts on one of his rhetorical benders? He is even capable of the blatantly untruthful accusation that his opponents are "too cowardly to meet fact with fact." May we remind the brave father that on December 17, 1938, *The Nation* published an article by the Reverend William C. Kernan which analyzed a series of charges against the Jews to which Coughlin had given radio publicity? Our contributor showed that the "evidence" produced in support of these charges was based on falsification and misquotation of documents and was in part derived from a Nazi propaganda service. Coughlin was supplied with a copy of this article and invited to reply. He has never done so, and *Social Justice* continues to repeat the lies which Mr. Kernan exposed.

Father Coughlin has now clearly reached a stage where truth has no objective meaning for him but is simply what he chooses to believe. One of these beliefs is that he and his Front have a monopoly of Christianity and that all who oppose them are communist, anti-Christian heretics. This is dangerous doctrine in America, where the majority of Christians do not choose to accept either political or religious instructions from a demagogic priest. They would be still less inclined to accept them were they to see a recent appeal for funds in *Social Justice* in which the "persecutions" of Coughlin were compared with the sufferings of Jesus, a piece of blasphemy ominously reminiscent of the more messianic utterances of Hitler. Our advice to Coughlin's superiors is not likely to be taken, but we suggest that it would be for the good of both America and the church if he were encouraged to take the Trappist vows of silence forthwith.

French Papers Must Live

BY BARBARA WERTHEIM

FRENCH newspapermen, says the columnist La Fouchardière, who is one of them, are divided into "journalists" and "journalists [*sic*]." To the second category belong the men from *Temps* and *Figaro* who, following the expulsion from France of Otto Abetz, a German agent, were arrested on July 12, charged, apparently, with being in the pay of the Third Reich. The long accepted fact of the venality of the French press has now exploded into the limelight. In parenthesis let it be said that in this case, as in some others, easy virtue is more attractive than respectability. In its passion, its quarrels, its gossip, its magnificent invective, its bad journalism but literary excellence, its infinite variety of political opinion, the French press is far more readable, entertaining, and in some ways informative than the British or American.

The French papers take money from outside because they are not self-supporting. Their chronic deficit is due partly to the high cost of paper and the low selling price (50 centimes, or about 1¼ cents at the current rate of exchange) but chiefly to meager advertising. From 80 to 90 per cent of newspaper advertising is a monopoly of the Agence Havas, which acts as advertising agent as well as news service. Because of the lack of competition the volume of advertising remains small. What there is has to be spread very thin over a great number of papers (there are 25 to 30 dailies in Paris alone) serving a comparatively small population. So the newspapers to help make ends meet avail themselves of "subsidies," of which there are five different kinds: subsidies from political parties, from banking and industrial interests, and from individuals; government "secret funds"; subsidies from foreign governments; disguised advertising; and blackmail.

Party funds are the chief source of support for the Left press. *Humanité* is the organ of the Communist Party, *Populaire* of the Socialist Party, *Cæuvre* semi-officially of the Radical-Socialist Party, particularly of what was once its left wing. But *Cæuvre* gets money from private sources too and today its "*Pas pour Danzig*" is the battle cry of the appeasers. *Le Peuple* is the organ of trade-union labor. *Ce Soir*, the new and successful evening paper, calls itself independent, but it is edited and presumably financed by the Communists.

The financial support of the Right press is considerably more tangled. Its roots trace back to the steel trust, the munitions manufacturers, the oil trust, the insurance

companies, the banks, and to various big individual industrialists who include such world-known names as Coty, the perfume manufacturer, and Hennessey, the cognac king. Leading all the others in the extent of its influence is the *Comité des Forges*, the steel and munitions trust dominated by the de Wendel family. It is impossible to describe here the infinite ramifications of the de Wendel pyramid, whose base even extends across the Rhine, although the German companies are controlled by the family in France. Two newspapers, the *Temps* and the *Journal des Débats*, the de Wendels own outright, and they have a greater or lesser interest in the *Matin*, *Jour*, *Journal*, and *Intransigeant*. Money stemming somewhere from the de Wendel interests could probably be found in many other papers. Although there is no overt connection between the *Comité des Forges* and Havas, a good proportion of the shares of the news agency are controlled by companies forming part of the de Wendel pyramid.

The *Temps*, with only 70,000 circulation but the most important paper in France, is the cornerstone of the press interests of the *Comité des Forges*. With its aristocratic gothic masthead, its huge surface, its pages unsullied by a single photograph or drawing and by only the fewest and chastest of advertisements, the *Temps* has three times the dignity of the New York *Times* and at least twice that of the *Times* of London. Its Daily Bulletin, really a front-page editorial, is generally taken as the mouthpiece of the Quai d'Orsay.

The finances of *Les Cinq Grands*, the five big morning papers of the Right, reveal what other sources of support feed the Paris press. Including the *Matin*, *Petit Parisien*, *Journal*, *Petit Journal*, and until 1938 the *Echo de Paris*, the five originally formed a powerful consortium in which they combined to keep prices up, fix the number of editions and special features, regulate costs and in general squelch competition where they could. They had a formidable ally in the Messageries Hachettes which has a monopoly of newspaper and magazine distribution throughout France. But rich and energetic newcomers have forced their way up until *Les Cinq Grands* are no longer as dominant as they once were. The fortunes of one of them, the *Petit Journal*, are particularly revealing of the vicissitudes suffered by so many French papers. Founded in 1863 and in its day one of the leading anti-Dreyfusard journals, it came eventually in 1932 into the hands of M. Ray-

mond Patenôtre, the eccentric millionaire, who sold it to Havas, bought it back, turned it into a Left paper during the flowering of the *mystique de gauche*, and then in July, 1937, sold it to Colonel de la Rocque of the Croix de Feu. Actually, while de la Rocque became director of the paper, the nine million francs which M. Patenôtre received are said to have been paid partly by M. de Neufville, ex-regent of the Bank of France and associate of the de Wendels, partly by a combine of insurance companies, and partly by a group of discontented Radicals.

Of the other four belonging to *Les Cinq Grands*, the *Echo de Paris* was largely financed by the Rothschilds and the international banking firm of Lazard Frères, but has since been absorbed by Léon Bailby's ultra-reactionary *Jour*. The *Matin* finds most of its support in the iron and steel industry in the north of France, including Schneider-Creusot, the arms manufacturers. The *Petit Parisien*, biggest and most successful of the morning papers, is owned by the Dupuys, a wealthy family who also own *Excelsior*, an illustrated daily, and who, for a time at least, managed to make journalism profitable. Finally, there is the *Journal*, some of whose shares are owned by Havas and some by the Banque de Paris et des Pays Bas.

Figaro, which is involved in the present scandal, was originally owned by M. Coty but passed into the hands of a Rumanian banker, M. Cotnareanu, who married Coty's divorced wife. A letter from him defending the integrity of *Figaro*, although failing to mention the relevant fact that he is its owner, appeared recently in the *Herald Tribune*.

Of the remaining Right papers the most important group consists of *Paris-Soir*, *Paris-Midi*, and *Intransigeant*, the majority of whose shares are held by M. Prouvost, a big textile manufacturer, and the minority by M. Beghin, who owns paper mills. These are *journaux d'information* as distinguished from *journaux d'opinion* like Henri de Kerillis's *Époque*, Doriot's now defunct *Liberté*, and the Royalist *Action Française*, whose fierceness so embarrassed the Comte de Paris that he repudiated its support and founded his own paper, the *Courier Royal*. Once on the *Index Expurgatorius* of the Vatican, *Action Française* has lately been restored to grace. Its editor, Charles Maurras, who was jailed for advocating the assassination of all the deputies who voted for sanctions against Italy, was last year elected to the Académie Française.

The second form of subsidy which newspapers can touch is the government "secret funds." In the budget of certain departments there are funds not earmarked for a particular purpose, and it is these which trickle out haphazardly to one paper or another. Much depends on personal contacts between government officials and directors of the newspapers. The Ministry of Foreign

Affairs until lately spent about 3,000,000 francs annually on the press while the ministries of the Interior, of Colonies, of Beaux-Arts, and of Public Works each spent lesser amounts. In the Parliamentary inquiry which followed the Stavisky affair the channels through which the "secret funds" passed to the press were revealed publicly for the first time. Everyone had taken it for granted that they existed, but public opinion was shocked to find how much of the public's money was going to the *presse de chantage*, the scandal and blackmail sheets. Dubarry, editor of the *Volonté*, a paper which Stavisky himself controlled, was alleged to have received subsidies totaling 140,000 francs a month from three different Ministries, the Foreign Office, War Office, and Ministry of the Interior. An obscure and disreputable weekly called *Bec et Ongles* ("Tooth and Nail," an apt description), partly controlled by the Stavisky coterie, was said to have drawn on the secret funds to the amount of 25,000 or 30,000 francs a month. M. Blum's government reduced to some extent the indiscriminate shoveling out of the "secret funds" but even Hercules could not clean the stables in one night.

One very substantial subsidy which the government continues to pay goes to the Havas News Agency. Amounting to about 14,000,000 francs (\$560,000) a year, it comes out of the budget of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. While the press, which publishes little foreign news as a rule, cannot begin to use the cables which come in every day from Havas foreign correspondents, the information contained in them is invaluable to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. By subsidizing Havas the government pays for this information much as it would pay for any other commercial service.

Subsidies by foreign governments, generally distributed by the press attachés of their embassies in Paris, are an endless and lucrative source of income to the French press. The hotter the situation in Europe, the more liquid the flow of foreign currency in Paris editorial offices. Italy is estimated to have spent between 80 and 100 million francs on the French press during the Ethiopian war and 32,000,000 francs on behalf of General Franco during the first year of his campaign. Japan has been busy too, and Germany above all, as the *Temps* and *Figaro* arrests indicate. M. Aubin of the *Temps* is said to have received 1,000,000 francs from the Reich and M. Poirier of the *Figaro*, 3,500,000.

Sometimes foreign government subsidies are paid in the form of steamship and tourist advertisements in exchange for a friendly attitude—that is, in normal times, when no more is needed. In times of crisis, when a specific purpose must be achieved in a hurry, fixed sums are paid to editors for the publication of favorable articles or for silence on unfavorable news.

The fourth type of indirect subsidy is hidden advertising, that is, the playing up of commercial enterprises

in news and feature stories. Hotels, restaurants, and casinos; theaters, cinemas, and other places of public entertainment; publishing houses and art galleries, manufacturers of everything, from automobiles to soap, buy space or sometimes buy silence. By far the most profitable type of hidden advertising is that dealing with stocks and bonds. A few inches on the financial page boosting a particular issue—for instance the famous Bayonne Pawnshop bonds which ultimately broke open the Stavisky case—have been known to bring a newspaper 50,000 to 100,000 francs.

Chantage, which is the French word for blackmail, is a final source of income. It is used chiefly by shady financial papers and scandal sheets but even some of the great dailies have on their staffs a person of ill-defined duties who is known as *maître chanteur* and who brings in hush money by digging out scandal in high places.

When Léon Blum was premier he tried to reform the French press by introducing a bill requiring newspapers to publish their sources of income but the bill was defeated. Perhaps *l'Affaire Abetz* may revive it.

This Is America

VI. THE NEW YANKEE G. O. P.

BY JOSEPH F. DINNEEN

AN IRISH-YANKEE coalition has returned aristocrats to power both in Massachusetts, where a Saltonstall defeated a Curley, and in Rhode Island, where a Vanderbilt defeated a Quinn. The coalition is being strengthened. The New Deal has never been so unpopular in New England as it is now. Yankees are obsessed with the idea that they alone will ultimately pay for what they consider the extravagances of the rest of the country. Already they are tightening their belts another hole, depriving themselves of federal luxuries, refusing aid, and preparing for the pay-off. Taxpayers' associations are throwing scares into legislators. In Massachusetts they found a constitutional clause permitting them to call Senators and Representatives before them, and they have been doing it, scorching the necks of elected office-holders for spending money and threatening to throw them out of office if as much as a nickel goes astray. The joint ways and means committee of the state legislature had to hold a meeting in the building that housed the automobile show to accommodate the crowd.

Business in New England is bad, has been slow to pick up. The only thing New England agriculture gets out of the Administration is the daily farm and garden radio program. Aroostook, the Maine potato country, is practically bankrupt, and growers there are as badly off as share-croppers or dust-bowl farmers. George H. Coombs, the state Director of Health, told the Maine legislature recently that 5,000 children in the Aroostook area were suffering from malnutrition and scurvy and then resigned his job. The federal Bureau of Home Economics reported 18,000 such cases. Governor Lewis O. Barrows answered merely that there was no scurvy, and let it go at that. Practically nothing, economically or

medically, is being done in Aroostook for the farmers.

Potato growers have not yet used cooperatives to merchandise their product as have the milk producers of Vermont, the only other state in the Republican column in 1936. Cooperatives are considered communistic, probably nurtured by the New Deal. Better be a Republican with malnutrition and scurvy than a communistic Republican in a cooperative—and better be dead than a Democrat.

Maine has Passamaquoddy as a monument to its misunderstanding of the New Deal—the great tidewater power plant, a giant fireworks set-piece that fizzled out, leaving a skeleton shanty town on the shore. Fisheries have benefited by a lobster treaty with Canada, but the New Deal is blamed for all of Maine's ills, and among these are listed the Wagner Act and the C. I. O., which raised wages and improved conditions, particularly among shoe workers in Lewiston and Auburn. The labor vote is too small to make a dent in the solid Maine Republican bloc. Neither the Democratic Party nor the New Deal can expect help here in 1940.

Labor gets a better break in New Hampshire, where Francis Parnell (Major) Murphy, the sixty-two-year-old, Lincoln-esque Catholic governor, has breathed new spirit into the Republican Party. New Hampshire went for Roosevelt by a scant 1,500 in 1936, chiefly because of the heavily Democratic French vote of the mill cities of Nashua and Manchester, and partly because of former Governor John G. Wynant's support of Roosevelt. Persistent Republican sniping, weak Democratic press agenting, and the popularity of Murphy make a Democratic victory impossible next year.

The state has obtained roads, bridges, a water-storage reservoir, and an aerial mountain tramway from the fed-

eral government. Murphy has balanced the state budget, cut the direct state tax, and knocked 25 per cent off the real-estate taxes. A shoe manufacturer and the state's largest employer of labor, he has improved and modernized workmen's compensation laws and eliminated employees' contributions to state unemployment compensation. The New Deal agricultural program offered little for New Hampshire, but Murphy has established a milk-control board and attempted to protect the farmers' egg and apple market.

The voice of New Hampshire in Washington politics is Styles Bridges, an extreme isolationist who describes America's foreign policy as "a hell of a mess." He wants to amend the social-security law and the Wagner Act, repeal the undistributed-profits tax, change reciprocal trade agreements. He wants a "non-dictatorial" wage-and-hour law and a fortified coast with plenty of anti-aircraft emplacements. Bridges is one of the Senators whose hair stood on end at that well-advertised secret conference on foreign affairs called by the President last February. In any national survey of Republican material the progressive Murphy and the reactionary Bridges must be tallied. The Democratic cupboard is bare in New Hampshire, and other parties there don't count.

There were 391,000 persons in the city of New York 100 years ago; there are fewer than that today in the whole state of Vermont, but a heartening, down-to-earth, honest liberalism persists in this adopted state of Sinclair Lewis, Dorothy Thompson, and Alexander Woollcott. It can't happen there. Hidebound Republicans though they are, Vermonters will take arms to fight for what they consider their rights. Governor George D. Aiken, author of a book on wild flowers, is one of a number of prophets of liberalism in the Republican Party. He has no use for the C. I. O., thinks it is fascist and would set Lewis up as a labor dictator, but he would fight at the drop of a hat for its right to be heard anywhere, in his state or in Jersey City.

Flood control is the big problem in Vermont, and vitally affects Massachusetts and Connecticut to the south. Millions have been spent in the Winooski Valley to prevent periodic destruction by the Connecticut. Dams and watersheds have been built by army engineers, but Roosevelt and Aiken clash whenever water power becomes a by-product of dam construction. Water power belongs to the state, not to the federal government, a corporation, or an individual, Aiken argues. The Federal Power Act of 1920 places all undeveloped water power in the hands of the Federal Power Commission. Aiken wanted a written guaranty from the government, a contract, vesting in the state the power rights in the flood-control project, and when he couldn't get it, he stopped work on four dams and refused \$11,000,000. The matter was finally settled by compromise, and the work is

going ahead. Of the three northeastern states, Vermont is getting the lion's share of federal money.

A champion of the Bill of Rights, free speech, and free assembly, Aiken harpoons all Tom Girdlers, rips the Hoover Republican Party to shreds, and frankly praises the New Deal. "I fight to preserve the rights of the people," he says. "To preserve them I have at times had to fight the public utilities and the federal government, and as far apart as these two forces are, I find the palms of both itch for acquisition. . . . Forget your hatred of the President. Stop crying fascist every time he moves. Stop worrying about reds in the White House."

Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont are lost to the Democratic Party. Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut are disputed territory. These three states have been helped by the New Deal, have received roads, bridges, underpasses and overpasses, and, far more important, jobs for white-collar workers and laborers. Cities and towns have had assistance with their public-welfare loads and this has served to put a check on increased taxation. The New Deal is still popular, but Roosevelt and the Democratic Party have slipped, substantially in the towns and less noticeably in the cities. Rifts within the party are responsible in Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

Whether Massachusetts goes Republican or Democratic depends upon the candidates and the internal political situation. James Michael Curley and Charles F. Hurley have all but wrecked the Democratic Party in the state. Curley despoiled public service and state institutions for two years and staffed specialized offices and hospitals with incompetent henchmen until even Democrats revolted. One of Hurley's last official acts was to pardon Raymond H. L. Patriarca, Rhode Island's public enemy No. 1, after he had served eighty-four days of a three-to-five-year sentence. A special commission is now investigating the purchase and sale of pardons. Whether the party can come back soon is doubtful. The Republicans offer an even broader and more liberal program, and display, in addition, sincerity and honesty.

Curley is getting old, and if he can't rule the party he will ruin it. He has an uncanny ability to win nominations. Three times in succession he has been defeated in elections—by Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr., for the United States Senate; by the thirty-seven-year-old, handsome Maurice Tobin for mayor of Boston, and by Leverett Saltonstall for Governor. They say now that Curley is done for, but they've said that before. He has a way of bouncing back highest after falling hardest. He will be a candidate for United States Senator against David I. Walsh next year, and if he wins the nomination, almost any Republican can defeat him. If he does not win the nomination he will have smeared Walsh in the primary so that Walsh cannot win. The Buckner case,

in which testimony showed that Walsh was entertained by Hollywood and stage pretties, gives Curley a mass of material.

Weary of being sold down the river by one of their own at every election, the Boston Irish joined with Beacon Hill to defeat Curley. Henry Parkman, son of a first family who served as a waterfront stevedore for a while after the war and became known as the "heavy-weight champion of Cream Puff Alley," and Maurice Tobin, from Roxbury, formed an alliance that became, in effect, a fusion party. Tobin became mayor and Parkman corporation counsel. The Boston Irish vote is ordinarily sufficient to wipe out the lead of Massachusetts towns and Republican cities, but when Curley ran for Governor he was swamped, chiefly by South Boston and the suburban Irish. Throughout the campaign, Saltonstall was utterly honest in his preachments, and the Irish felt that they could trust him. The Republican Party was even more liberal in its promises than the Democratic Party and there appeared to be some possibility that it would keep its word, something the Democrats had failed to do for years. The Irish voted Republican, elected Saltonstall, even though Labor's Nonpartisan League and organized labor supported Curley because of his labor record.

As Governor, Saltonstall stepped into one of the nation's hottest spots, to clean up the mess left by Curley and Hurley, cut down expenses, and restore dignity and efficiency to a demoralized state service. He has gone about it with determination and brought upon his head the howls of criticism of incompetents whom he has swept out of office. In the meantime the fusion has grown stronger, and Republicans are alert to make it permanent. Massachusetts wants the major features of the New Deal, but it does not want the old Democratic leadership. The Democratic Party is top-heavy with pseudo-intellectuals, spurious liberals, and labor hypocrites. The Republican Party, liberalized reluctantly, perhaps a bit painfully and for political expediency, has at least been trying to make room for honest liberals and has appropriated large chunks of the New Deal.

A good deal is likely to be heard about Saltonstall between now and the time the Republican convention is held. Personally I am all for him because I think he is liberal and there never has been any doubt about his honesty and integrity, a novel thing for a Massachusetts Governor in recent years. Unfortunately some of the old Republican Party wheelhorses appear to be able to get his ear. He is charged with emasculating the State Labor Relations Act, though that seems to have been pretty well accomplished before he came into office. Perhaps he can't cut adrift from his tory colleagues too abruptly, and their influence is detected by his opponents in some of his appointments. Liberals were especially aroused over his selection of Lewis Hovey for the State

Board of Conciliation and Arbitration. As publisher of newspapers in Beverly and Haverhill, Hovey is noted for his labor-baiting tactics. The struggling Old Guard is still hanging on desperately, but the chances are that Saltonstall, in the long run, will succeed in coming up through all the thick layers of conservative Republicanism.

Saltonstall is the spearhead and Governors Murphy, Aiken, and Vanderbilt the advance guard of a new Republican Party in this corner of the country. If Saltonstall is chosen for top spot or running mate at the next Republican convention, he will very materially strengthen Republican chances in New England, regardless of whether or not Roosevelt runs for a third term. To both Irish and Yankee voters, Saltonstall looks like a good choice. From this rockbound coast, Vandenberg looks like a Rover Boy, Dewey and Henry Cabot Lodge are too young, and Taft appears to be a dud.

Much the same thing happened in Rhode Island as happened in Massachusetts. Governor Quinn and Walter O'Hara clashed over the management of the Narragansett Racetrack. It looked for a time as though civil war would break out, with the Governor's state troopers facing O'Hara's Pawtucket police. Quinn finally had his way and closed the track for a time. The people of Rhode Island got pretty sick of Democratic rule and elected Vanderbilt because he was sponsored by no political machine and was opposed by both Democratic and Republican leaders.

In Connecticut a regrettable division of opinion among the liberals led to the election of a conservative Republican, Raymond E. Baldwin, bitter critic and opponent of the New Deal. An obscure figure, Baldwin was picked by the Connecticut machine—the Manufacturers' Association and the Connecticut Light and Power Company—as a human sacrifice in the 1938 election, with no thought of victory. The voters, however, were split. Governor Wilbur L. Cross, a popular figure, was in his eighties, and scandals in the Waterbury city government, involving Cross's lieutenant governor, gave voters the idea that Cross was no longer able to cope with marauders in his own party. The result was that liberals of the state voted by scores of thousands for Jasper McLevy, the Socialist Mayor of Bridgeport, who had made a splendid record as a conservative administrator and an honest man. McLevy and Cross divided the Democratic and liberal vote. Baldwin did not receive a majority of the votes cast and became Governor almost by default. In spite of the fact that he is a minority Governor, he is ambitious for high place in national Republican councils and is trolling.

War or a business boom may change the whole political complexion of the six states. Already the effect of war industries is being felt. Quincy, Massachusetts, where the Fore River shipbuilding plant is going full

blast building six warships and seven merchantmen, has no unemployment problem. Its taxes are 98 per cent collected. The only persons on public welfare are the aged and the infirm. New England's textile mills and shoe factories anticipate army and navy contracts and some of

its machine shops are now at work on armaments. Industrial New England, like Quincy, can forget and forgive all—if the wheels start spinning.

[The last article of this series, on the Middle Atlantic States, will appear in an early issue.]

Mexico Today

II. PRESIDENT CARDENAS AND HIS PEOPLE

BY WALDO FRANK

LAZARO CARDENAS was at the Laguna when I got there.

When the President expropriated the oil wells he was moved by an ethical-intellectual process. The moment had come, he knew, when he must choose between loyalty to his office and submission—however masked and rationalized by caution—to interests which, he was well aware, were stronger than any “democratic” government in the world. He recalled the analogous moments in which his predecessors, Obregón and Calles, had flinched. He acted on cool principle. But when Lázaro Cárdenas founds a school or builds a dam or opens the door wide to the Spanish refugees; when, above all, he restores to those who through the ages have worked the land their right in the land, his act is emotional and aesthetic. The whole man is engaged. And the whole people responds. In the Comarca Lagunera there was a joy in the air, as of love. The President was the lover; the folk was the beloved.

They were waiting for him at El Cuije: waiting all day, without nervousness or haste. He would show up, and whenever he came it would be on time, and dinner time. A pavilion was set in the main square; a band of musicians silently waited. Along the dusty road were the mounted men in their saddles, waiting. In the improvised kitchens the women under the supervision of the *maestras* prepared the feast and kept it in condition.

There is never, even in the cities, any adequate policing when President Cárdenas arrives. This man, hated by all the upper caste of his country—a country with a tradition of violence—takes no precautions for his life. His aides make no effort to keep the crowds away. And I have seen him at night, alone, in the plazas of big towns, talking with the old women and the loafers. Once I asked Cárdenas about this. “It is important that the people know I come among them without fear.” This, his smiling and casual answer implied, was more important than his personal safety. One night in the hostile Yaqui country of Sonora I wandered about the patio of the village house where the President was working. When Cárdenas

is outside the capital (more than half the time since he took office), he literally pitches camp wherever he is, and the place takes on the air of a general headquarters in war time. Indeed, he is waging war of a kind—with weapons of peace. It occurred to me as I explored the dark yard and saw, through an open window, the President at his desk, how easily I could shoot him; and then the thought came that my presence there might arouse suspicion. No one challenged me. I found an army engineer seated on a water-jar, enjoying the mild night. I told him my thoughts. He replied: “If we were afraid for the President, the people would feel it. The good of his journeys would be defeated.”

About five that afternoon Cárdenas showed up at El Cuije within the dust of the cavalcading horses. There was emotion, but it was deep and dignified. These men, many of them old, had ridden to battle in the Revolution. More than one fought with Pancho Villa. Cárdenas was for them the new leader—first among equals—in the old fight.

With the men and women and children pressing close, he walked to the pavilion, nodding, shaking hands, smiling. The folk barred themselves off, of their own accord, and quietly looked on as the feast began. (Breakfast at seven, dinner at five—unbroken work between and after—is the custom when the President travels.) Now the dishes were cleared—I remember with affection a savory roast of kid, *cabrito*. Improvising their own order, the crowd press in where the President sits ready for them. One by one he listens to them: men and women speaking without haste, without worship, without fear—the folk at ease and the President at ease with swift cool questions extracting the essence of the matter.

“In 80 per cent of the cases,” he told me once, “I can do nothing with their petitions. But in 20 per cent I can cut through—in three minutes—some injustice or obstruction which years of formal handling could not solve.” It is plain he considers the percentage of success high; and in the organic view of life it is high. And of course, high or low, the percentage of satisfied claims in a

hundred Mexican villages does not give the essence of the matter. Like any people shut in upon themselves, the Mexican folk suffer from feuds among their petty chiefs and their clans; the President's appearance often is enough to make these differences vanish. But even this is not what counts most. A people not organized to articulate its wishes through the regular democratic channels of public opinion needs a chief who will come directly to the people. Cárdenas with his almost constant journeys through the republic has created a *ceremonial* of profound meaning. What he hopes is that this unprecedented coming of the chief to the people will make a *new Mexican tradition*. Its very success, any way you look at it, is going to cause trouble in the future. Woe to the successor who discards the new tradition! And my sympathy to the successor who, lacking the Cárdenas genius of cordial energy, tries to live up to it!

The note of this folk of El Cuije toward the man who embodies for them their own revolution was a respectful, familiar, calm exultance in *owning* him. Later all the *ejidos* staged a huge demonstration in the new hippodrome outside Torreón. Veterans of Villa, children, syndicates of teachers and laborers, mothers, hospital workers, students, and finally the proud men themselves riding their new tractors and harvesters defiled for hours in the dust. This was no political mob enjoying its own trumped-up grandeur or put through its paces by a Trainer-Führer. The spirit was too deep for ebullience; it was a sober reverence of homage to the leader who had served them well, a sober self-pride for work well begun. The order of the parade was ragged and slow. It came from within the folk and went upward to the leader.

Again there was no effort to give the President police protection. I sat next to Cárdenas in his box (on the other side, Indalecio Prieto, Minister of Defense of the murdered Republic of Spain—and here, too, I felt a symbol). Many an individual pushed his way up through the crowd, unannounced, anonymous, and gave the President a letter or spoke a word with him. What strong texture of loyalty, integrating the multitude about him, does Cárdenas depend on to prevent some fanatical enemy from coming up with a pistol in his pocket instead of a petition?

Ten years ago I wrote of the Mexicans as a sad people. This sadness has deeper roots than the economic oppression of republic, colony, and Aztec empire. One may speak wisely of the morbid blood sacrifice of Anáhuac and its suffusion in the spirit of the people; or of the inclement Mexican earth, its extremes of weather and water and height. Not long ago a troupe of engineers building the railroad from Sonora died of thirst in the desert of Lower California. The bodies were brought to the capital, and as the funeral procession wended through

the streets, a cloud burst; the mourners had to wade through water which overwhelmed the bodies that had died of thirst. There is a symbol of Mexico's ironic extremes; but it does not finally explain the deep and rending sadness that speaks in the music and faces of this people. What explains the Mexican sadness most essentially is the Mexican gaiety. A people whose energy, sensitivity, and imaginative prowess make naturally for ebullient gladness will turn sad in a hostile, unconquered world.

Ten years ago I felt the potential gaiety and the fulfilled sadness. Two years ago . . . Now there is a great change. The native joy, the *alegría*, of this people is in the open.

One always found it in the children, of course. One morning in Lerdo, a Durango town, I was walking with a Mexican friend who is somewhat leaner than I. With my usual writer's impudence I thrust my nose into the open window of a school. At once the grill was crowded with laughing children's faces. After a few volleys of witticisms, in which I was worsted, we went on. Down the street a way a murmur made us look back. Fifty children, released for the lunch hour, were upon us. "You are Laurel and Hardy," they informed us—a gross exaggeration. And they accompanied us on our walk through the main streets of Lerdo, pelting jokes and laughter. That was, and is, the children of Mexico. Now a new gaiety, fragile perhaps because unsure of itself, begins to pervade the people.

I felt it strongly on Sunday morning in the capital when I made the rounds of the new popular sport parks. The baseball, football, *frontón*, racing, swimming are a pretext for gaiety. I saw a professional ball game that might compare honorably with our minor leagues; but the crowd's interest was less in the game than in itself. In England and the United States the extrovert crowds study the game, silent in Albion, noisy at home, for the game's sake. *Jai alai*, the great Basque game, has always been a pretext for gambling, and therefore President Cárdenas suppressed it. Now thousands of workers in the capital flock to the sports on Sunday for an easy pretext to laugh and to jest.

To clinch my point, I return once more to the Laguna. One Sunday afternoon the folk of Torreón devised a *charreada* in the bull-ring. (A *charro* is an elegant cowboy, all decked out in leather and spangles; a *charreada* is sport with bull, horse, and lasso, not by professional performers but by cowboys.) Ten thousand *ciudadanos* made a blue gay funnel of the ring; blue shirts, blue overalls, blue jerkins, under the blue sky. In a flowered box sat Cárdenas, surrounded by black-eyed provincial ladies. I had been dining late with men who in other lands would be called dignitaries: General Francisco Múgica, president of the constitutional congress of 1917 which drafted Mexico's charter, and now one of the

pre-candidates (not destined to win) to succeed Cárdenas; Colonel Calderón, the young and able Governor of Durango; Agustín Arroyo Ch., the Rabelaisian and brilliant chief of the D.A.P.P., the autonomous propaganda ministry which heroically struggles to offset an exorbitant and free reactionary press; and Luis I. Rodríguez, until a few days before I write this the powerful "boss" of the P. R. M., the Partido de la Revolución Mexicana—a deposed Mexican Farley, of whom more later. We got to the ring late and had to climb over the heads of hundreds of shouting fans to remote stone seats near the brass band. The men we climbed over knew Música, Calderón, and Rodríguez; and courteously let them pass, as they might let anybody pass, not holding their laughter. The word "dignitary" went out of the Mexican lexicon with Díaz.

My point is this: the lassoing and bull-riding were nothing to write home about, if home is a place that remembers Buffalo Bill Cody; but I have never seen a spectacle in which the show meant less and the public more. These Mexicans, who can live a day on a stack of *tortillas* with *chile* and *frijoles*, were taking the arena as a pretext. All the *charro* had to do was miss with his lasso or tumble off a bucking bronco to release blue gales of gaiety. Having missed once, all he had to do was miss again and again, to keep the laughter going. Like children they were, these workers and *campesinos* seated with their chief in the high hollow ring, asking only a whirl of dust or a tumble to spark their exuberance and send it flaming into the afternoon.

Many years ago I called happiness "the condition of human energy that has found a channel." Five years of Cárdenas seem to have given the Mexican folk for the first time happiness; to this deep, darkly gifted people, complex as their past and as their land, has come at last a synthesis of their energies like love—a sense of *canalization* for their whole human effort which hungers equally after both bread and beauty. Always, when this channel exists, love is present, for love is the synthesis that makes our energies flow.

This is not the condition of all Mexico today; not of the sullen upper classes; not indeed of the articulate capital which is ruled and colored by the servants and parasites of these classes. It is the state of the folk—in the *ejidos*, in the nationalized industries, even in the subject silver towns under the dust and the mud.

And I say, the folk has found a channel for its energies, which is not the same as a goal or fulfilment: a channel is a design and a dynamic *toward* fulfilment. Whether this channel will lead to the goal we must consider later.

[The concluding article of Mr. Frank's series on Mexico Today, dealing with the political dangers to the country, will appear in an early issue.]

In the Wind

ACCORDING TO a confidential memo prepared by the Isolationist National Council for the Prevention of War, Hitler has offered "peace terms" to France and England. Immediate steps would be a four-power parley—England, France, Italy, and Germany—to "settle" the Danzig issue and Italian claims on France. The long-range "solution" would "guarantee Germany's hegemony in Middle Europe" in return for immunity for the British Empire; England is to remain the dominant sea power, Germany supreme on land, and armies are to be limited to 300,000 men. The Council asserts that the proposal has split the British Cabinet, that it has the support of financial and pacifist circles in England, and that it will be made public soon.

THE CHICAGO *Tribune* recently carried a cartoon attacking "six years of government spending" without fulfilment of "prosperity promises." Elsewhere in the same issue appeared these headlines: "Baldwin Locomotives' June Orders Increase"; "United Air Lines Profits in June Rise to \$134,080"; "Illinois Output of Oil Soars to Another Peak"; "Kroger, Nat. Tea Sales Increase to Another Peak"; "Several Rails' Revenues Climb From a Year Ago"; "Bendix Profit Is Higher for June Quarter."

LATEST "UNDERGROUND Germany" story: Hitler, anxious to test popular opinion, disguises himself and then visits a crowded cafe. After conversing with a patron, he leans over and inquires: "Frankly, what do you think of Hitler?" The patron looks around apprehensively, makes certain that no one is listening, then replies: "Between you and me, I rather admire him."

THE INTERNATIONAL Relief Association *Bulletin* reports the appearance of new-style food-cards in Franco Spain. On the left there is a printed list of rationed foods, the signature of the card-holder, and space for the official stamp. On the right side are blank spaces where the card-holder lists the names of anti-fascists he has exposed. To insure adequate food, the right side must show zealousness.

THE BRITISH WAR Office has admitted circulation of a letter which discouraged admission into the British Territories of men who had fought for Loyalist Spain. The theory behind the letter, officials explained, was that the men had received "communist" education. The irony of the stand was emphasized when Thomas Freeman-Mitford, a brother-in-law of Sir Oswald Mosley, was discovered at a fascist meeting giving the fascist salute. Mitford has just been appointed an officer in a British regiment—the "Queen's Westminsters."

IN PEORIA Heights, Illinois, there are two road-signs hanging side by side. One reads: "Roosevelt Road"; the other: "Danger, Travel at Own Risk."

[We invite our readers to submit material for *In the Wind*—either clippings with source and date or stories that can be clearly authenticated. A prize of \$5 will be awarded each month for the best item.—EDITORS THE NATION.]

Issues and Men

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

JOEL ELIAS SPINGARN was one of the most interesting men in American life, although by no means as widely known as he should have been. He began his active career as an instructor in Columbia from which he had received his Doctorate of Philosophy, and he might readily have spent the rest of his life in that academic circle but for a chivalrous act—his coming to the defense of Harry Thurston Peck when the latter was ousted from the Columbia faculty because of his being involved in a spectacular breach of promise case. He insisted that any resolution adopted by the faculty concerning Professor Peck should pay due and proper tribute to his standing as a scholar and his services to the university. So intense was his feeling that it led to his directly attacking President Butler, of whom he said that he was surrounded by sycophants and that "sycophancy is a condition of official favor." That led to the end of his own teaching activity in Columbia; although as former head of its Department of Comparative Literature he could readily have commanded a fine position at some other university, he never returned to academic life.

Although a great lover of peace, this quiet, gentle scholar—gentle until aroused by his keen sense of wrong and injustice—volunteered for the officers' training camp at Madison Barracks, New York. Though he had never had any previous military experience, was not of the conventional officer type, nor of very strong physique, he was one of the two men to graduate with rank of major. So excellent was his service in France in the face of the enemy that he came back as a lieutenant-colonel. Modest and unassuming as he always was, that part of his life he relegated to the past just as soon as the war was over and he was mustered out. He remained to the end one of those completely disillusioned by the war to end war, by the results of his own sacrifice.

It is his work for the colored people of the United States for which, I believe, he will be longest remembered. He joined some of us early in the organization of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, speedily came to the front, and for more than twenty-five years labored on behalf of the most disadvantaged people in American life. He was the Association's president at the time of his death, as he had been for many years. There his counsel was of the wisest, his judgment, notably as to the official activities of the Association, of the best, and always he was the most cooperative and reasonable of men in debate and discus-

sion where policy was concerned. His founding of the Spingarn medal granted annually to the Negro who has done most for his race in the previous year was a great service. I have often regretted that he was not a more brilliant orator, that he did not put himself forward more prominently, for he never had the just recognition that he deserved for his unselfish and extraordinarily valuable labor. That was the way he wanted it; the way he thought it ought to be. He never sought distinction or laurels.

These achievements and others of his in the field of reform have reconciled many for his failure to go on in literary criticism. His first published work, "A History of Literary Criticism in the Renaissance," which appeared in 1899, gave him high rank at once. Translated into Italian and published in Italy in 1904 with an introduction by Benedetto Croce, it made him well known in the literary world of Italy. In this country George E. Woodbury, himself a great master, felt that Joel Spingarn gave greater promise than any of the men whom he taught and worked with. Spingarn's "The New Criticism" appeared in 1911; his "Creative Criticism" in 1917; his one book of poems also appeared in 1911. A monumental achievement was his editing of "The European Library" in twenty-five volumes between 1920 and 1925, as was his earlier editing of critical essays of the seventeenth century for the Oxford University Press.

There was still another side to him, and that was his love of nature and of horticulture. He knew more about clematis than any other man and wrote several monographs on this flower and grew every variety of it at "Troutbeck," in Amenias, New York, which John Burroughs described as "the loveliest farm in America" and Sinclair Lewis once called a "grass-grown cathedral." There he lived the life of a country gentleman in the best sense, a leader in the community, always actuated by public spirit, ever eager to serve others. There he dared to bring his colored friends and share with them his beautiful home. There a lot of us met for conferences when it was considered dangerously radical to bring colored and white together to discuss at table the joint concerns of both races in America. Today such gatherings are commonplace and are not unknown even in the South. But here as in other ways, Joel Spingarn pioneered; a true American, a gallant soldier, an outstanding scholar, his death reminds us anew how many such patriots we owe to the Jews among us.

BOOKS and the ARTS

Keats, Definitive

THE POETICAL WORKS AND OTHER WRITINGS OF JOHN KEATS. Hampstead Edition. Edited with Notes and Appendices by H. Buxton Forman. Revised with Additions by Maurice Buxton Forman. With an Introduction by John Masefield. Eight Volumes. Limited to 1,050 Sets. Charles Scribner's Sons. \$96.

OPINIONS easily differ on such limited editions as this. In a world where money is needed for a thousand urgent and humane purposes, the purchase, at \$12 each, of eight tall books by a poet whose complete verse may be bought anywhere for a dollar doubtless rates a first-class certificate for snobbish ostentation. But anyone who likes books and honors literature will drop his guard before these beautiful volumes—a new monument to Keats and a tribute to the house of Scribner and to the same taste and scruples that produced its earlier definitive editions of James, Meredith, and Santayana, as well as the complete and final Yeats, which impends. These are books equal to anything of their kind produced in this century—the best of the Nonesuch editions, or Count Kessler's—and quite aloof from the flashier attractions of the Limited Editions Club, useful chiefly as table ornaments, in which people look at pictures by "the most distinguished modern artists" and are thereby successfully distracted from the text. Here Mr. T. M. Cleland has exercised his faultless hand, producing a white buckram cover, blind-stamped with garlands of oak and laurel which frame a tall lyre, its base carved with the initials "J. K." and the poet's dates in Roman numbers. Spacing and proportion give their felicity to every page. The plates are engraved by Emery Walker. The rag paper is strong and pliant. The Caslon type shows its unaffected, unstylized classicism, sharp yet fluent, from cover to cover. Books should be cheap, but on occasion they should also be as rich as this. And as we all know, the cost of this entire edition of 1,050 copies comes to less than it will take to conduct the next war for ten minutes on any given afternoon. Keats deserves his latest honor, and society deserves to be reminded anew of a great poet, and of the fact that a handsome book may cost as much as a cheap gas mask.

The hitch in the present instance comes in wondering if such a civilizing influence will surmount the vexations aroused by a preeminent example of editorial obstructionism. The Hampstead Edition is "definitive"; the Buxton Formans have given two lifetimes to the study and veneration of Keats; scholarship is a noble labor; but scholarship should know and keep its place. Here the reader of Keats is obliged to fight grimly past every conceivable kind of interference—a mass of ninety-five "acknowledgments"; a preface (signed) by M. Buxton Forman telling of his family's Sunday walks in Hampstead; another preface (signed) by John Masefield, saying practically nothing; a life of Keats; a life of George Keats; bibliographies of editions and critical works; and a

century's accumulated litter of annotations, variant readings, guesses, opinions, marginalia, and the pullulating comments of almost every person, dead or living, who ever got a word in edgewise on the subject of Keats's life, labors, and misfortunes. Here is all the cluttering apparatus of pedant-fattening and collector-baiting antiquarianism, with little but passing attention to Keats's art or his claims to poetic greatness. On almost every page there is a dam of footnotes, over which thin rills of verse are allowed to flow. The sonnet on Chapman's Homer trickles across three pages at a depth of less than an inch, the remainder being clogged with such unnerving data as Leigh Hunt's vague remarks on the poem's quality, Cowden Clarke's tale of its composition, Tennyson's remarks to Palgrave about the Cortez-Balboa confusion, what Mr. H. L. Clark of Purdue University, Indiana, said in the London *Times* Literary Supplement about Book V of Robertson's "History of America" as a source of the Pacific image, and what Mr. John H. Wagenblass of Cambridge, Massachusetts, said in the same paper about the sonnet's resemblance to John Evelyn's tribute to Creech's "Lucretius."

If this apparatus has a place, it should be in separate volumes, and not stand as competitor to Keats's text, which here it mangles, slices to pieces, and distorts, never allowing a poem to stand on its own margins and declare its own beauty of structure to the eye. Complaints on the obstructions of textual scholarship may be an old story, long out of date. If so, they should have cured editors of bad habits of unnecessary and systematic interference. A new edition with this one's physical brilliance, coming at a time when a fresh appraisal of Keats's genius is due, stirs an old quarrel. One wants Keats in his truest text, but one wants a good deal less of the Buxton Forman family or what Mr. Wagenblass said in the London *Times*. Of course such vexation is tempered by a sense of classic irony. One reads here again, on page lx, Severn's brief and poignant account of the poet dying in Rome in his last loneliness and despair. One notes the legions of his students, editors, and wealthy collectors. One observes the feet that shuffle across his lines and wear the carpet with their shoes. One hears the coughing in the ink.

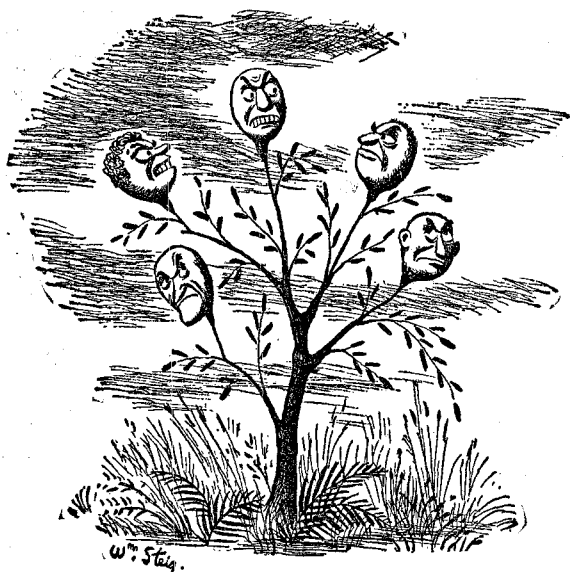
Lord, what would they say,
Did their Catullus walk that way?

MORTON DAUWEN ZABEL

Fallacies of Race

RACE AGAINST MAN. By Herbert J. Seligmann. G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$2.75.

TODAY theories of race, the controversies and fallacies that center in them, immediately call to mind Germany and fascism. The aftermath of the war mercifully laid to rest for a time the overweeningly conceited construction of Houston Chamberlain and the echoes of Gobineau. But since the advent of Hitler, racism has been resurrected with a



Race Prejudice

vengeance. For racism is the core of the Nazi ideology. Without it Germans might have remained human.

Mr. Seligmann attempts an ambitious survey of the pros and cons of this vexatious race theory, ranging widely through the literature on the subject and through new, sometimes still unpublished, material which brother anthropologists have kindly put at his disposal. With little pretense at original research he has skilfully collated all the latest information covering the field and has performed a timely task of popularization in the best sense of the word. His book confounds both race bigotry and its corollary, totalitarianism, not through passionate polemic but by a patient refutation which speaks for itself.

The author successively discusses the extravagant claims and contradictions of the Nordic myth as a specific instance of racism gone mad, the generally amorphous conceptions of race entities, the overemphasis of a conjectural heritage at the expense of our knowable environment, the problem of miscegenation and hybridism, and the complex origin of mankind's contribution to culture. He points out that the concept of a pure race is pure myth; the concept of a superior race breaks down because all races, given the same opportunity, make their commensurate contribution to our common store of culture. Nor is there any hard and fast association between cultural and physical traits.

In his chapter on the Negro race problem Mr. Seligmann follows the well-known theories and anthropomorphic statistics of Professor Boas, supplemented by his own practical experience while working with the Association for the Advancement of Colored People. To date, he points out, the inferiority of the Negro remains an unproved theory. That theory was formulated largely to keep the Negro in his place, and it is precisely by not keeping in his place that the Negro is proving his equality. Mr. Seligmann proceeds to use our own immigration and assimilation problem to show how America, far from being merely a "melting-pot," has actually been a laboratory in which the surprising adaptability of transplanted races can readily be observed.

The chapter entitled The Jew and Anti-Semitism is so compact and fact-laden that it would readily serve as the

matrix for a book on the subject. Mr. Seligmann advances an original theory to explain the insensate killing of Jews once it had been artificially fostered for theological and Alexandrine reasons. He employs a Freudian schema, assuming a split in the medieval psyche caused by an intolerable sense of guilt and sin, with a consequent fear of a wrathful God-father. The killing of Jews was motivated by a desire to get relief from a subjective sense of sin. The theory is ingenious and psychologically sound, though to many it may not seem a sufficient explanation. A similar theory might be applied to Negro rape lynchings in terms of the lyncher's own libidinous guilt. Murder always springs out of the depths of man's nature, but not all those depths have yet been plumbed.

Mr. Seligmann writes in a clear, forceful style which makes the intricate subject of his book easily intelligible to the layman. The reader will feel himself better equipped either to listen to discussions by experts on the subject or to take part in after-dinner conversations on the topics of fascism and communism and even perhaps democracy. No doubt Mr. Seligmann will hear protests from aggrieved anthropologists upon whose toes he has been compelled to tread, and we shall again hear echoes of the old heredity-versus-environment argument. But he has done a real service for anthropology. For it is true, unfortunately, that bias and prejudice still play a large part in the sciences devoted to man. Quite aside from vicious, conscious propaganda, findings often tend to conform to preconceptions, and truth yields to the personal equation. Perhaps the candid reconsideration of such subjective lapses which the onslaught of fascist obscurantism has compelled will bring anthropology nearer to the ideal of a pure science.

ALFRED B. KUTTNER

The First Whole World

DUINO ELEGIES. By Rainer Maria Rilke. German Text, with an English Translation, Introduction, and Commentary by J. B. Leishman and Stephen Spender. W. W. Norton and Company. \$2.

WE ARE grateful to the translators of the ten-part, tightly packed lyric conceived by Rilke at Duino Castle on the Adriatic in 1912 and achieved by him in the year in which "The Waste Land" saw the sun. Their objective was momentous. The cycle of "Duino Elegies" is poetry in a style individually grand: severe and elevated, simple and musical; unflaggingly swelling with sudden *cre-scendi* and sinking again in freely mixed elegiac meters; invariably impassioned and frequently sublime. A softness and somber magic almost Rembrandt-like suffuse it.

The content is prophetic, a thrilling conception of the supernatural, the world "which is over or under the natural world, sustaining, explaining and never violating it." This metaphysical realm of Rilke's is the very antithesis of the alternately potent and impotent one represented by Eliot's languid masterpiece. It is wholly good, a constant unity, one timeless and divine event in which all that man divides—fortune and misfortune, the apparent and the visionary, death itself and life—fully coincides. To Rilke's mind it supplied the basis of "the first whole, hale world" offered to man's experience.

Throughout his career this well-nigh gentlest of poets had been the poet of death. He had divined its will at the core of things, and existence merely "a portion of, a tone within," an unknown whole. "Awakeness was elsewhere." Singer of requiems and of Alcestis, Eurydice, and the Pietà, he had sought to fathom life's mysterious other kingdom, and at times seemed to receive, through apertures by which his friends had vanished into it, intimations of its "green of veritable greens, veritable sunshine, veritable woods." Then, possibly in consequence of some fresh spiritual integration, he felt himself here in life in the midst of all the illuminated and unilluminated sides of being and filled with a tragic sense of man's evanescence in this universe. Angels, "creation's darlings," and "birds deadly to the soul" alone endured in it. Lovers temporarily rivaled them. Their prowess, none the less, was transitory: "We breathe ourselves out and away, from ember to ember yielding a fainter scent." This mood, mournful, yet serene and pervaded by a sense of the value of sorrow, was the mother of the first two Elegies.

The experience progressed. At first it saddened. From out the double realm of life and death he felt mounting into mortals the fatal force of lust and bestiality, the blood's "hidden, guilty river-god" of the "gloomy blast from the twisted conch." But the persistently grim fourth and fifth elegies reveal the gradual passage from resignation to affirmation. Rilke had comprehended the possibility of accepting ephemerality as a condition, challenging an external destiny in the name of the "nameless bond between earth and heaven." The heroic principle became apparent: indifference to continuity and the sense of the heroic deed's endurance among the stars. There followed ecstatic comprehensions of "super-numerous existence" welling from the double realm, and man's earthly capacity for immortality. In exhibiting the inward forms of things, man, it seemed to Rilke, could "stamp the provisional, perishing earth deeply, painfully, passionately into himself" and become "a mouth of Creation." The earth desired an indivisibility like music's. Finally the lands of death grew luminous. Symbols recalling those of the Egyptian "Book of the Dead" furnish the eerily glamorous, wholly sublime tenth elegy. The "source of Joy" gleams in a mysterious moonlight. "Among mortals it is a carrying stream."

Lyrical, with its incessant rhythmical rise and fall, steady combination of concrete and abstract terms, exquisite symbolization both of the inwardness of this new-found reality and of the responsive motions of Rilke's deepest self, his cycle relates the system to the natural world, rendering it sensible to the heart. The poet of death had become one of life's high affirmers. And Messrs. Leishman and Spender have produced an all-in-all satisfactory version of the prodigious, intricately organized original. True, certain of their paraphrases are loose to the point of infidelity. Their style sometimes is jaunty and pedestrian, unfair to Rilke's oftentimes simple but invariably noble, reverberant one. Still, a number of amazing approximations to his swift and complex imagery and his gravely serene music compensate for these possibly unavoidable faults. The partners may thus be said to have upheld Rilke's arms in carrying not only an exclusively English-reading public but all Rilke students closer to a newly extended world, truly the "first whole, hale one." For it is an

ancient verity that so long as life maintains itself merely out of a frantic fear of death and the desire to cheat it, it cannot be healthy, holy, whole.

PAUL ROSENFELD

Fine Talk

PARADISE PLANTERS. The Story of Brook Farm. By Katherine Burton. Longmans, Green and Company. \$2.50.

EQUALLY without fear or footnotes, defying the scholarly sanctities, refusing to persuade us that her material is "always utterly correct in detail," Katherine Burton has written a fine history of Brook Farm. That is not to say that Mrs. Burton makes great claims to profundity. Although she presents a more skeptical view of Mr. Shepard's Bronson Alcott, just as Mr. Shepard brought down Mr. Brooks's later Emerson, she offers in general no big philosophical flights or psychological descents. As a study of communal settlements her "Paradise Planters" lacks the intellectual breadth which marked Robert Parker's study of Oneida. Yet Mrs. Burton has accomplished—and I am almost tempted to add, in her unfathomable feminine way—what all the profundity and breadth in the scholarly world cannot by themselves do. Visibly and immediately she has created Brook Farm, with its Institute of Agriculture and Education, its bonds and milk, its individualistic heifers and "temporarily indigent" guests, its hydropathy and Orphic sayings, with all its richness of spirit and sandy earth.

Mrs. Burton gains her success by weaving the recorded utterances of the Farmers and their friends into a series of conversations, some of which took place, some of which must have taken place, and some of which, I suspect, now for the first time take place. But perhaps this conversational medium is the precise form for the history of Brook Farm. It is a great temptation today to view our nineteenth-century communal experiments, since they are more illuminating than we once supposed, as more significant than in fact they are. The Farmers reveal great social insight and protest, they are a fountain of indigenous idealism, but they are ultimately monastic rather than revolutionary, and their America, intellectually turbulent as it was, is entranced as by the Ancient Mariner's glittering eye. A Franklin, calculating to create, breeding stoves, lightning rods, batteries, came before Brook Farm. After it came Jay Gould, touching Franklin's pleasures with his modern destructive genius, calculating to destroy—with profit. Besides these two we may estimate Ripley, Dana, the saturnine Orestes Brownson in their proper historical proportions. The form of "Paradise Planters" is its truth. The Brook Farm social experiment must end by being considered the conversation of souls who fled the Calvinist fire, to have their moment before they sank in the bottomless pools of finance capitalism.

Yet such conversation can have in it, as we know from other like moments in history, much of the prophetic. So many of our current intuitions and anxieties appear in these Farmerly discussions of the oversoul, spiritism, Shakespeare, dietetics, feminism, fertilizers. Like her transcendental plowmen, Mrs. Burton is promoting "the great purpose of human culture" in recording so well the talk and lives of these acute

VINCENT SHEEAN

"His new book stands above *PERSONAL HISTORY*," says the *New York Times Book Review*. . . . "In the writing there is the strong throb of a spirit which may if it spreads, check the rise of fascism, as Jim Lardner tried to check it, near Hill 376, at Corbera, in Spain, on the night of Sept. 23, 1938."

JOHN CHAMBERLAIN says, in the *New Republic*: "The finest thing in the book by all odds is the chapter called *The Last Volunteer*, which is the story of Jim Lardner's enlistment in the International Brigade."

And FRANZ HOELLERING writes in *The Nation*: "The author of *Personal History* returns in his newest book to the genre of his great success—reporting in a literary style that goes beyond newspaper writing, presenting the temperament, the feeling, and thoughts of the observer as he looks at worlds great and small."

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but frustrated brethren who, as Louisa Alcott remarked in her sketch of Fruitlands, "said many wise things and did many foolish ones." For if in the end Brook Farm was only verbal, it was exhilarating language—until Fourier's grim, portentous shadow fell over talk and talkers alike, and the idealists were confined to their proper cells in the new practical Phalanstery.

MAXWELL GEISMAR

Odette Keun and the U. S. A.

I THINK ALOUD IN AMERICA. By Odette Keun. Longmans, Green and Company. \$3.

SOMEWHERE in this book Mme Keun tells us that she was brought up in a strict Protestant sect, and in her childhood was deeply moved by the stern laws of Jehovah. This may partially account for the circumstance that there are two Odette Keuns: one, a very feminine, discursive, and emphatic lady who sometimes takes us rather embarrassingly into her confidence with regard to personal matters, and who, one feels, is by no means an individual to be overlooked in a crowd; the other, a person of sterner stuff, a seeker after the truth imbued with an almost Calvinistic fervor. It is the second Mme Keun who has written most of this account of her discovery of the New World, to which she came with the passionate hope of finding something to redress the sinking balance of the Old; and if you insert a *t* in the adjective, you will not misinterpret Mme Keun's bitterly expressed nausea with the Europe of today.

But the first loquacious and acutely observant Mme Keun keeps breaking through, and is responsible for delightful if strongly rendered pictures of the superficial phenomena of the American scene. This is the Odette who watches *le sport* and is horrified; the Odette who delights in the drugstore, and drowns her inside with eight cups of "cawfee" to prove that it is all gratis after the first cup; the Odette who is shocked by the lack of modesty in American women when traveling, and disappointed by the way the usually sociable American keeps to himself on trains; the Odette who describes the American child as "detestable" and New York women when young as very pretty "with rather peevish mouths, rectangular bodies with architectural lines, thin square shoulders, a long fall from neck to ankle, no breasts, no hips, no belly, no buttocks," and who pleasantly satirizes New Yorkers' attitude to their city: "You mourn for this innocent people so cruelly condemned to rush on and on and on, without reason and without end, or to be devoured in an excessively disagreeable manner. . . . By what unprecedented biochemical process, you wonder, did an agglomeration of lumps of stones and concrete and a network of streets convert themselves into an inescapable ogre martyring intelligent human beings?" But her fellow-pilgrims from the Old World will probably enjoy best her summing up of the, to them, amazing viewpoint of orthodox Republicans: "They move in a world of illusion of which, outside the lunatic asylums, there is no longer the faintest trace in Europe. In this world of theirs, wealth has moral merit; poverty is a deliberate perverseness, what you go and wallow in . . . and out of which you can leap in a jiffy by means of a minimum of search for, and perseverance in, employment."

There is so much shrewdness in these and kindred observations that one wishes that Mme Keun had been able to persist in her original intention of visiting if not every state at least every section of the Union, and recording her impressions. As it is, the Mme Keun who is a sort of sister to John the Baptist takes over, and encouraged and corrected by a severe masculine mentor, Philip, who reminds her of the necessities of clear and logical analysis, starts to deal out good and bad marks for good and sufficient reasons. Her method is to argue from the general to the particular—thus that the lack of personal eccentricity which she finds is due to lack of independence of thought, for "what is eccentricity but the fearless expression of one's own spirit?" It is not all blame, of course, but since Mme Keun crossed the Atlantic with, as she says, altogether superhuman expectations of these United States, she was bound to be disappointed to an extent. For she came looking not for the achievements of the material world but for results from the spiritual and democratic values asserted in the Declaration of Independence. And she left the country with at least a measure of faith that America will save our species for civilization. To my mind this is a stimulating and very honest book.

NORAH HOULT

RECORDS

TWO new recordings are at hand of Beethoven's Sonata for violin and piano Opus 30 No. 3 (the fine performance by Kreisler and Rachmaninov is still listed in the H. M. V. catalogue and may still be obtainable on Victor). The new Victor performance is by Heifetz and Bay (2½ records, \$5.50), the Columbia by Milstein and Balsam (two records, \$3.50). The sonata has the lightness, charm, and tenderness, and with these the strength, that are in these early works of Beethoven; and these qualities are communicated in the simply phrased, dynamic performance of Milstein and Balsam, as they are not in the sensitive playing of Bay, the mincing, wailing little swells that are prominent in Heifetz's style for any music he plays. Bay, moreover, functions in this performance as a mere accompanist whose opening piano melody in the second movement Heifetz feels at liberty to overshadow with the violin's wreathing figuration; whereas Balsam plays on an equal footing with Milstein in a well-integrated ensemble performance. A fault, however, is the dull sound of Balsam's piano.

Prokofiev's "Peter the Wolf," the orchestral fairy tale which has amused the Boston Symphony's audiences during the past season, has been recorded by Koussevitzky (three records, \$6.50). I enjoyed the work when I heard it in Carnegie Hall; but even then Prokofiev's method of referring to his characters resulted in repetition of their themes, which I found excessive after a time; and now I find that on the records there is too much narrative for the amount of music—partly, I think, because Richard Hale projects this narrative from the phonograph into the room as he did from the platform into the large space of Carnegie Hall. The performance of the music is brilliant, the recording of the performance a little too much so.

Victor seems to be more successful in recording the lush splendor of the Philadelphia Orchestra under Stokowski, which, on a single record (\$1.50), is heard in moderation in a transcription of a beautiful Gagliarda by Frescobaldi, and in excess in a transcription of the C minor Fugue of Book I of Bach's "Well-Tempered Clavichord"—a transcription which, to someone who recalls the size of the original piece, its medium, its emotional scope, is laughable in its culminating overemphasis. On another single (\$1.50) Chaliapin is impressive in "Arise, Red Sun" and "Song of the Needy Pilgrim"; on still another (\$1.50) Marian Anderson sings beautifully "Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child" and "I Don't Feel No-Ways Tired."

For the rest, Roy Harris's Sonata for piano, recorded by Johana Harris (two records, \$3.50), sounds to me today as pretentiously sterile as it did eight and nine years ago; Mozart's youthful String Quartet K. 80 reveals nothing to my ears that justifies its being placed permanently on view by the Kreiner Quartet (three records, \$5); Chopin's Piano Concerto Opus 21 I find less interesting than the Concerto Opus 11, and in fact quite dull, and though the old Victor set hasn't the spaciousness and richness of recorded sound of the new one, it does offer clear and adequate recording of a performance by Artur Schnabel that proceeds from a finer musical taste and command of the instrument's resources than the new performance by Alfred Cortot (each set four records, \$8).

B. H. HAGGIN

RESORTS

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Letters to the Editors

On the Coughlin Terror

Dear Sirs: Congratulations on your wonderful article, *The Coughlin Terror*. We certainly hope that such articles will be continued. They must be very effective if they have to be answered by Coughlin with more lies. You have received much publicity from him this week. It is encouraging to find that the truth is getting under his skin. Good luck, and we hope that other periodicals and Mayor La Guardia as well will come to your aid.

RUTH AND JULES SANDERS
Detroit, July 30

Dear Sirs: I have just read with sincere appreciation the article by James Wechsler, *The Coughlin Terror*. The incidents mentioned in this article are in part known to me. They are not known to a good many persons who should be acquainted with them. For some time I have deplored the apathy of our newspapers and, in part, of our periodicals with regard to the rapidly growing Nazi-inspired Christian Front movement. In view of their neglect, your article stands out so much the brighter as a powerful force for enlightening the residents of our city about the tactics of Father Coughlin. Your article has been recommended to me by several of my acquaintances, and I have in turn recommended it to others. We all look forward to future coverage of this pressing problem.

IRVING GOLD
New York, July 22

Dear Sirs: I have this day sent the letter quoted below to Mayor La Guardia:

"Three of my friends recently returned from a visit to New York and reported to me the prevalence of magazine vendors who shout opprobrious epithets, anti-Semitic slogans, and create scenes and near-riots whenever anyone protests such un-American conduct. I was inclined to discount their experiences—although their veracity had never before been questioned—until I read the article by James Wechsler in *The Nation* of July 22, concerning the Coughlin terroristic activities. I am not a Catholic, but most of my Catholic friends agree with me that Coughlin is distinctly a social embarrassment, that he is deliberately fomenting trouble,

and that repressive law-enforcement actions should be taken by the city police of New York to prevent the creation of un-American racial hatreds.

"A group of us had planned a visit to the New York World's Fair later this summer, but we now hesitate to make the trip. Not only are we disinclined to witness open exhibitions of medieval barbarism and intolerance, but we do not care to patronize a municipality which permits such incidents to occur and tolerates lax law enforcement by pro-Coughlin police. Unless we can have some assurance of adequate curbing of this open flaunting of American principles, we shall spend our vacation elsewhere."

EDNA MITCHELL
Sacramento, July 25

Dear Sirs: Thank you for your enlightening article on the activities of Führer Coughlin in New York. A Philadelphian, I went to New York recently to see the Fair. As a companion and I were strolling along watching the New York crowd a young lady stopped us and asked us to buy a copy of *Social Justice*. Having encountered Coughlin's group in Philadelphia (Station WDAS has been a victim of their pickets for many months), I glanced at the headline, then at the girl, and remarked "What's that—fascist?" I thought I was in a free country but a policeman who stood near by shouted: "What's the matter? Does the shoe pinch?" I retorted that I couldn't see how a paper like that was permitted to be sold in New York. He said that if I got "smart" again he'd turn me in—maybe I'd like that. To tell the truth I was pretty meek and quiet, and I quickened my steps. The cop had me bullied and I got a taste of Germany in my mouth.

In my own city Chestnut Street has been invaded by a group which displays signs reading "Join the Christian Front" and sings hymns while it spreads hate. For months these demonstrations have continued under the protection of the police while Jews, tight-lipped and helpless, watch and pass on. Where are the humanitarians? Where are the great numbers of anti-Coughlinites? Why shouldn't *someone* carry a sign saying "Christ said 'Love thy neighbor as thyself'" or "Christ is love—not

hate"? Jewish judges and politicians as well as others have read the signs, heard the propaganda, and hurried along, unwilling to lend their influence to the cause of justice while there is still time.

I hear all about me, "Anti-Semitism cannot happen here." But after hearing General Moseley's report and witnessing the Coughlin inferno getting hotter every day, I'm inclined to believe that not only can anti-Semitism happen here—but it is here. I want to thank you again for giving this picture of fascism in the making in New York. I think La Guardia's home should be swamped with telegrams and letters of protest against his police force who need policing themselves.

BETTY ROBERTS
Philadelphia, July 23

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